

## A POWER AT TUSKEGEE

Mrs. Josephine Wilson Bruce, the Head of the Girls' and Women's Work at Tuskegee — A Tribute to Her Sterling Qualities.

By reason of the distinguished position held by her late husband as well as by reason of her own intrinsic worth as a woman, Mrs. B. K. Bruce has for a number of years been properly distinguished as the first lady of the land so far as the Negro race is concerned. She is a woman of superior education and possesses a delicacy and refinement of nature that would distinguish her in any company. The Negro has had few, if any, who possess the refinement, culture and irreproachable character that is true of Mrs. Bruce. A speaker not long ago in a public address referred to her as a "queenly woman."

Notwithstanding all of the rare privileges which were accorded to her during the life of her husband, she never for a moment lost her head nor became intoxicated in a way to make her lose her identity with the best interests of the race. After the death of her honorable and distinguished husband, instead of living in ease and comfort as she could easily have done by reason of her fortune, she chose rather to enter into active, sympathetic and helpful work for the upbuilding of the Negro race.

Mr. and Mrs. Booker T. Washington, of the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, a few months after the death of her husband, offered her the position of Lady Principal of the Tuskegee Institute, and as soon as she became convinced that Tuskegee was the place where she could prove of most vital service to the race she consented to accept this important position where she could have the moulding of the thought, character and ambitions of hundreds of Negro women. Although both Mr. and Mrs. Washington had known Mrs. Bruce during her life in Washington, neither of them had a correct idea of the true worth and nobility of character of this woman until she began her work at Tuskegee about a year ago. It did not take very long to demonstrate to every one connected with the institution that she was a woman of rare executive ability and saw clearly into the present condition and needs of the race. Few people who have not had the privilege of seeing Mrs. Bruce in her actual work at Tuskegee can form a correct idea of her ability to organize and control. No de-



MRS. B. K. BRUCE,  
Lady Principal of The Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute,  
at Tuskegee, Alabama.

tail in connection with the work in her work at Tuskegee is left unmastered by her. She goes to the bottom of everything that she undertakes. Perhaps the thing that has helped to make her work at Tuskegee the rare success which it is, is in her high and thorough Christian character, which impresses every one at once who comes into contact with her.

She is so tremendously interested in the work of her department that she forgets herself in her efforts to carry out the plans and purposes of the institution. Every girl and every lady teacher who comes into contact with her goes away the better and stronger for having had the privilege of coming under her influence. Her influence and usefulness are not confined by a great deal to merely performing the work of her immediate department. Her influence and effort extend to every department of the institution. She has already won the complete con-

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## A REAL OTHELLO

A Tribute to 'Ira Aldridge The Black Roscius.—His Success and Achievements in Foreign Lands—His Untimely Death. An Exemplar of Historic Art.

This distinguished Negro tragedian was in his early life employed by the great Edmund Kean, in the humble capacity of valet and accompanied that gentleman to England.

While in England he cultivated a taste for the stage, which Mr Kean discovering, encouraged in every possible way.

Mr. Aldridge made his debut at the Royalty Theatre, London, England, as Othello. He first appeared at Covent Garden Theatre, April 10, 1833. As Othello, in 1848 he played at the Surrey Theatre. In 1852 he visited Germany, where he played three years. Honors were showered upon him wherever he appeared. He was highly spoken of by Edmund Kean. Arrangements had been made for him to play in New York and the day fixed for him to sail from England was Aug. 15. He died April 7, 1867.

The St. Petersburg Correspondent of Le Nord under date Dec. 5, 1859, wrote: "The success of the Negro actor Ira Aldridge has been wonderful. At his debut people were curious to see an Othello who needed neither crape nor pomade to blacken his face, many expected tears of laughter rather than tears of emotion when they learned that Iago and Desdemona would reply to him in German. (The absence of an English troupe forced to play with German actors). Those who counted on this were strongly deceived. From his appearance on the stage the African artist completely captivated his audience by his harmonious and resonant voice and by a style full of simplicity, nature and dignity. For the first time we had seen a tragic hero talk and walk like common mortals, without declamations and without exaggerated gestures. We forgot that we were in a theatre, and followed the drama as if it had been a real transaction.

The scene in the third act, when the sentiment of jealousy is roused in the ferocious Moor is the triumph of Aldridge. At the first word of the wily insinuation you see his eye kindle; you feel the tears in his voice when he questions Iago, then the deep sobs which stifle it; and finally when he is

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## OPERA HOUSE VENTURE FAILS.

Colored Men Back of Newport News Company Withdraw—House Sold.

Newport News, Va. Special.—The Columbian Opera House, erected about two years ago by a company of colored men, has been sold under a deed of trust. The trust deed was for \$11,500, and the price paid for the building was \$16,500.

While the house brought in good returns, a streak of bad luck seemed to pursue the enterprise. Just as the building was being completed the walls bulged and the roof collapsed, killing a carpenter. When the notes became due the company was unable to pay them, and the house was advertised for sale. Temporary arrangements were made, however, and the building was retained by its first owners.

After a number of vicissitudes, the colored men back of the enterprise decided to give up the struggle, and the place was sold. It was purchased by a colored man who resides in New York.